

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 SP-02 TRSE-00

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CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 OFA-01 INT-05 DIWY-01 PA-02

CU-04 (ISO) W

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R 201117Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANJUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2474

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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MONTREAL FOR ICAO

PARIS FOR UNESCO

ROME FOR FODAB

VIENNA FOR IAEA AND UNIDO

E O 11652: NA

TAGS: EAID UNDP ICAO UNIDO SG

SUBJ: CERP 0008 - EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
IN THE GAMBIA

REF : STATE 64907

SUMMARY. THE UNDP PROGRAM IN THE GAMBIA HAS BEEN TREADING
WATER FOR MANY MONTHS. RESREP WAS AWAY FROM HIS OFFICE ON
HOME LEAVE AND CONSULTATIONS, AND HE WAS PHASING OUT TO
MOVE ON TO ANOTHER ASSIGNMENT. LEADERSHIP PASSED TO WFP
REPRESENTATIVE FOR EXTENDED PERIODS, A FACT WHICH PLEASED
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NO ONE, ESPECIALLY HIMSELF. SECOND REASON IS THAT GOTG

HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN FORMULATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT PLAN OVER PAST NINE-TEN MONTHS. UNDP PLANNING/PROGRAMMING HAS OF NECESSITY ADOPTED A WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE UNTIL PLAN IS UNVEILED THIS SUMMARY. END SUMMARY.

A. ROLE OF UNDP IN UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

WITH ABSENCE OF REREP SO MUCH OF TIME AND CAUTIOUS WAITING FOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN, ESSENTIALS FOR COORDINATION WERE CIRCUMSCRIBED. RESREP VIGOROUSLY ASSERTED HIS LEADERSHIP ROLE VIS-A-VIS UN-RELATED PERSONNEL IN COUNTRY AND SOUGHT DIRECT CONTROL OVER THEIR ACTIVITIES. THIS WAS A MIXED BLESSING: ON POSITIVE SIDE, IT TENDED TO DRAW TOGETHER AN EVER GROWING GROUP OF EXPATRIATE ADVISORS FROM VARIOUS AGENCIES INVOLVED IN DISPARATE ACTIVITIES; BUT ON NEGATIVE SIDE IT RESULTED IN A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF UNHAPPINESS. THE RECENTLY DEPARTED RESREP RELATIONSHIPS WITH UN-FAMILY EXPERTS AND UNDP STAFF WERE NOT ALWAYS THE BEST. WITH A NEW RESREP NOW IN COUNTRY THIS WEAK SPOT HOPEFULLY WILL IMPROVE. ON OTHER HAND, RELATIONSHIPS OF FORMER RESREP WITH GOTG OFFICIALS WERE VERY GOOD. HE STABILIZED UN SHIP THROUGH SOME TEMPORARILY DIFFICULT TIMES. UNDP CONCLUDED THAT FOR ITS ACTIVITIES TO BE MOST EFFECTIVE IN THE GAMBIA, GOTG PLANNING EFFORT HAD TO BE STRENGTHENED. ACCORDINGLY, UNDP EXERTED ITS INFLUENCE STRONGLY IN THIS DIRECTION. THIS MET WITH SOME SUCCESS BUT AT A CERTAIN, ALBEIT TEMPORARY, COST. RESULT IN IMPROVED PLANNING INTEREST BY GOTG WAS WELL WORTH SMALL PRICE PAID.

UNDP AND IBRD WORK WELL TOGETHER AND COORDINATE EFFECTIVELY. RECENT TECHNICAL TEAM SENT BY IBRD/FAO TO DETERMINE PARAMETERS OF POSSIBLE IBRD/IDA PARTICIPATION IN AN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR LOAN (JOINTLY WITH UNITED KINGDOM) WAS CLEARLY IN CONCERT WITH RESIDENT UNDP STAFF. JOINT IBRD/FAO TEAM WAS HERE TO DETERMINE SCOPE OF PHASE II OF ON-GOING ACTIVITY CURRENTLY RESTRICTED TO IRRIGATED RICE UNDER PHASE I. (NOTE: THIS IS ABOUT TO BE THROWN AWRY WITH VERY RECENT GOTG DECISION TO TURN OVER ALL IRRIGATED RICE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY TO PRC.)

UNICEF HAS SUCH A TINY ROLE IN THE GAMBIA THAT IT HAS UNCLASSIFIED

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LITTLE INPUT INTO UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMMING EXERCISE.

B. COORDINATION OF ALL EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

FORMAL COORDINATION DOES NOT TAKE PLACE ALTHOUGH UNDP PROGRAM OFFICER HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO REGULARIZE INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON WORKING LEVEL. THIS HAS NOT MET WITH MUCH SUCCESS MOSTLY BECAUSE IN A COUNTRY AS SMALL AS THE GAMBIA,

INFORMAL AD HOC CONSULTATIONS OCCUR ALL THE TIME. EVERYONE KNOWS EVERYONE ELSE IN DONOR COMMUNITY. THIS INFORMAL MEANS HAS OPERATED EFFICIENTLY SO FAR AND SHOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO. UK HIGH COMMISSIONER VOTES HIS SATISFACTION WITH THIS STYLE OF COORDINATION AND OBSERVES THAT IT PREVENTS OVERLAPPING OF EFFORT. CENTRAL PLANNING AT MOMENT IS CENTERED IN NEWSLY ESTABLISHED MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC PLANNING AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT. DEVELOPMENT PLAN IS BEING DRAWN UP, SO UNDP STANCE MUST BE A REACTIVE ONE FOR TIME BEING.

GOTG SEEMS TO BE EXPRESSING A PREFERENCE FOR UN-TYPE EXPERTS IN CONTRAST TO BRITISH PERSONNEL: SEVERAL ODM-SUPPLIED ADVISERS FILLING BOTH CADRE AND NON CADRE SLOTS ARE NOT BEING RENEWED ESPECIALLY IN AREA OF AGRICULTURE WHILE NUMBER OF UN EXPERTS HAS INCREASED TO WELL ABOVE 20 NOW. UN FAMILY PERSONNEL ARE SELF CONTAINED WHILE ODM SUPPLIED PERSONNEL REQUIRE SIGNIFICANT GOTG SUPPORT, FINANCIAL AND/OR LOGISTICAL.

GOTG PLACES NO APPARENT OBSTACLES IN WAY OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL DONOR COORDINATION/ CONSULTATION IN COUNTRY. IN FACT IT IS TACITLY ENCOURAGED. FROM GOTG POINT OF VIEW, IF SUCH INTERACTION WILL HELP BROADEN COUNTRY'S AID BASE AND HELP RATIONALIZE WHAT ASSISTANCE IS RECEIVED, SO MUCH THE BETTER. ONE EXCEPTION IS NEW PRC INVOLVEMENT. PRC TEAM HAS STATED THAT THEY CANNOT COORDINATE WITH IBRD BECAUSE ROC IS STILL A MEMBER. GOTG IS PLAYING ITS PRC CARDS FAIRLY CLOSE TO THE CHEST LARGELY, IT IS FELT, BECAUSE GOTG IS STILL VERY MUCH FEELING ITS WAY WITH THIS NEW DONOR. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF UNDP COORDINATION WITH PRC EFFORT IN THE GAMBIA.

C. ROLE OF RESREP VIS A VIS OTHER UN SYSTEM ACTIVITIES.

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UNDP IS THE ONLY UN ACTIVITY IN COUNTRY OF ANY SIGNIFICANCE. SCENE IN THE GAMBIA DOES NOT PROVIDE MUCH SCOPE FOR

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COORDINATION OUTSIDE NORMAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. THE GAMBIA, FOR EXAMPLE, IS NOT PRONE TO MAJOR VIOLENT DISASTERS. UNDP DID, HOWEVER, ALLOCATE DOLS 10,000 FOR DISASTER RELIEF AFTER A VILLAGE FIRE.

D. COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEWS

SINCE COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT PLAN IS NOW BEING FINALIZED, UNDP HAD DEFERRED ANY CONTEMPLATED COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEW.

UNDP OFFICE IS SCHEDULED TO ADD TO ITS STAFF AN ASSISTANT RESREP FOR PROGRAMMING. THIS IS REQUIRED IN THAT UNDP ANTICIPATES THAT ITS PROGRAM WILL BE TREBLED IN 1977. GEARING UP FOR 1975-76 IS LINKED WITH FORTHCOMING DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

E. APPRAISAL OF PROPOSED PROJECTS.

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AID DEVELOPMENT OFFICER IN BANJUL MAINTAINS LIAISON WITH ALL LEVELS OF UNDP STAFF AND INDIVIDUAL EXPERTS AS NECESSARY. THIS IS AD HOC, NOT FORMALIZED. OFFICERS FROM RDO/DAKAR COORDINATE AS NECESSARY WITH UNDP/BANJUL WHENEVER THEY VISIT THE GAMBIA. CLOSEST CONTACT HAS BEEN IN WFP BAILIWICK WITH AID OFFICER BANJUL AND RFFPO/DAKAR COMMENTING UPON WFP PROPO-

SALS AND CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH WFP/REP. AS UNDP IN HOLDING OPERATION THIS YEAR, AND NOT EMBARKING UPON SIGNIFICANT NEW PROJECTS, EMBASSY HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO COMMENT ON PROPOSED PROJECTS.

F. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

THERE SEEM TO BE NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES SINCE LAST YEAR. UNIDO PROJECT WITH COMMERCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT BANK (GAM 71/007) IS GOING ALONG WELL. BANK IS ON ITS FEET ALTHOUGH STILL WOBBLING. AN EXTENSION OF WELL RECEIVED EGYPTIAN ADVISOR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED. COMMERCIAL BANKING WILL BE A MAJOR ACTIVITY. PROJECT IN PHYSICAL PLANNING (GAM 69/003) MAY BE GETTING BACK ON TRACK AFTER A LONG PERIOD OF DIFFICULTY BECAUSE OF PERSONALITY CONFLICTS AND OPERATING AMBITIONS OF A FORMER EXPERT. STILL, THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN CONTINUING FOR ABOUT SEVEN YEARS AND ONE WONDERS WHAT UNDP HAS TO SHOW FOR IT. GOTG PHYSICAL PLANNING OFFICE HAS NOT BEEN INTEGRATED INTO NEW MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC PLANNING AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT. THIS MAY OR MAY NOT BE A GOOD THING, BUT IT DOES LEAD TO A BIFURCATED APPROACH. UNDP WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO TAKE A VERY HARD LOOK AT THIS PROJECT BEFORE COMMITTING A LOT MORE MONEY.

THE INSHORE FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (GAM 72/006) IS ADDRESSING A CLEAR NEED AND POTENTIAL IN THE GAMBIA. IDEALLY IT SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED, BUT IT HAS BEEN FACTING IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS. GOTG HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO GIN UP ENOUGH FUNDS TO BUY FOOD FOR CREW OF EXPERIMENTAL VESSEL. THIS REFLECTS LESS PROBLEM WITH UNDP CONCEPTUALIZATION THAN WITH GOTG PRIORITIES. ONE PROBLEM IS THAT A SEVERE PERSONALITY CONFLICT WITHIN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES IS PREVENTING FULL ATTENTION BEING DIRECTED TOWARDS NEEDS OF FISHERIES DIVISION. WHILE THIS IS NOT A UNDP PROBLEM AS SUCH, UNCLASSIFIED

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IT CLEARLY EFFECTS PROGRESS. STILL ACTIVITY IS JUSTIFIED BY LOCAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.

G. PROJECT EVALUATION

FIRST SIX OR SEVEN TRIPARTITE ANNUAL REVIEWS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED. TWO OR THREE MORE ARE SCHEDULED OVER NEXT FEW MONTHS.

H. WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

UNDP IS ALERT TO ITS RESPONSIBILITIES, BUT MUST OBTAIN GOTG SUPPORT AND INITIATIVE. PROJECT GAM 75/010 HANDICRAFT FELLOWSHIP COULD BE CONSIDERED AS FOCUSING ON WOMEN IN

DEVELOPMENT. WHILE ILO HAS IDENTIFIED POSSIBLE SUPPORT FOR THIS PROJECT MENTIONED IN COUNTRY PROGRAM RESERVE LIST, BOTG HAS YET TO SEND PROPOSAL FORWARD.

I. FOLLOW UP

OTHER THAN PROJECT COMMENTS ABOVE, THERE ARE NO SPECIFIC MATTERS AT PRESENT.

GENERAL. WHILE THIS POST RECOGNIZES THAT REACTIVE STANCE OF UNDP IS NECESSITATED BY EXIGENCIES OF MOMENT, AN OVER-ALL JUDGMENT MUST NEVERTHELESS BE PRESENTED THAT UNDP ACITIVITIES SUGGEST A POTPOURRI OF UNRELATED ACTIVITIES. THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE OF SECOTR PLANNING, FOR EXAMPLE, WHICH PROVIDES A FRAMEWORK FOR A RATIONAL FORWARD ALLOCATION OF LIMITED RESOURCES. THIS NECESSARILY INHIBITS ANY DONOR-COORDINATION ROLE THAT UNDP MIGHT WANT TO PLAY. SENIOR GOTG OFFICIALS NOTED THIS PHENOMENON BUT IN LARGE PART TOOK RESPONSIBILITY UPON THEMSELVES FOR THIS PROBLEM. THEY OBSERVE THAT UNDP HAS TRADITIONALLY REACTED TO SPECIFIC GOTG REQUESTS BUT THAT GOTG HAS NOT EXERCISED PROPER COORDINATION.

FOR EXAMPLE, A NUMBER OF UNDP ACTIVITIES ARE SCARCELY MORE THAN OBSERVATION TOURS AND LONGER TERM FOREIGN TRAINING. A NUMBER OF SHORT-TIME CONSULTANTS COME, WRITE REPORTS, AND ULTIMATELY HAVE LITTLE IMPACT. SOME AREAS LIKE LIVESTOCK HAVE BEEN EXAMINED AND REEXAMINED. SUCH DISPARATE AD HOC UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTIVITIES OF A RELATIVELY SMALL SIZE DRAIN LIMITED RESOURCES. THERE ARE USUAL UN EXPERT-TYPE PROBLEMS OF LONG RECRUITMENT DELAYS. A FACILE BUT QUESTIONABLE RESPONSE WHEN THIS HAS HAPPENED IS TO TRANSFER FUNDS RESERVED FOR AN EXPERT INTO FELLOW-SHIP PORTION OF PROJECT, THUS INCREASING NUMBER OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD. OVERSEAS TRAINING SHOULD BE MORE CAREFULLY PROGRAMMED AS AN INTEGRAL FACET OF A PROJECT THAN THIS. MCFARLAND

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